

Message Text

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AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02
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AF-10 ACDA-12 MCE-00 NEA-10 HA-05 /138 W
-----107526 032026Z /43

R 031904Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8143
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MADRID
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 07839

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FR, PARM
SUBJECT: MARCHAIS ON FOREIGN POLICY

REF: A) PARIS 7283; (B) PARIS 1304

SUMMARY: IN A LENGTHY INTERVIEW IN LE MONDE OF
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MARCH 3, GEORGES MARCHAIS, SEC GEN OF THE FRENCH
COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) REVIEWED PCF FOREIGN POLICY,
BRINGING OUT THE DISPUTES WHICH PERSIST BETWEEN
THE PCF AND THE FRENCH SOCIALIST (PS) ON A NUMBER
OF ISSUES, PARTICULARLY DEFENSE AND NUCLEAR
QUESTIONS AND THE WESTERN SAHARA. MARCHAIS ALSO
REAFFIRMED PCF FAITH IN DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM AS

THE BEST TYPE OF PARTY ORGANIZATION, AND
REVEALED THAT HE BELIEVES PARLIAMENT SHOULD HAVE
A LARGER SHARE OF CONTROL OF FRENCH FOREIGN
POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. MARCHAIS' INTERVIEW WITH LE MONDE DID NOT
OFFER SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION ON SUBSTANTIVE
PCF FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS, BUT, APPEARING SO
CLOSE TO THE FIRST ELECTION ROUND, IT TENDED TO
LOCK THE PCF IN ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES WHERE THEY
DIFFER FROM THE PS. HIS COMMENTS ON A
PARLIAMENTARY ROLE ON FOREIGN POLICY GAVE A PREVIEW
OF LIKELY DISPUTES BETWEEN A LEFT GOVERNMENT AND
THE ELYSEE OVER CONTROL OF FOREIGN POLICY.

3. DEFENSE AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY: MARCHAIS
SAID THAT THE PS REVIVAL OF ITS EARLIER PROPOSAL FOR
A REFERENDUM ON THE FORCE DE FRAPPE (SEE PARA 10,
REF A) "LEAVES AN ENORMOUS QUESTION MARK" ON THE
DEFENSE POLICY OF A LEFT GOVERNMENT. HE ALSO
ACCUSED THE SOCIALISTS OF NOT BELIEVING IN AN
INDEPENDENT DEFENSE, BASED ON THE FACT THAT THE PS
HAD DELETED, IN ITS UPDATED VERSION OF THE
COMMON PROGRAM, THE PHRASE "REFUSAL TO BE ASSOCIATED
WITH THE CONSTITUTION OF ANY NEW INTEGRATED
MILITARY ORGANIZATION." MARCHAIS INTERPRETED
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THIS DELETION TO MEAN THE PS " HAS NOT RENOUNCED
THE IDEA OF A EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY."
MARCHAIS ALSO REITERATED THE PCF PROPOSAL FOR A
COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR DECIDING ON ANY USE
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (PARA 9, REF B), TO WHICH THE
PS IS OPPOSED (PARA 9, REF A). HE SPECIFIED THAT
THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY IS FOR THE
EXECUTION, RATHER THAN THE TAKING, OF DECISIONS
ON NUCLEAR USE.

4. ALGERIA AND THE WESTERN SAHARA: MARCHAIS
STRESSED THE NEED TO DEVELOP A POLICY OF COOPERATION
WITH ALGERIA, AND TO REVERSE THE PRESENT POLICY
OF FRENCH MILITARY SUPPORT TO MOROCCO AND
MAURITANIA. A LEFT GOVERNMENT WOULD END THE
FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN AREA AND TERMINATE
ARMS DELIVERIES TO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HE SAID.

5. EUROPEAN UNIFICATION: MARCHAIS STRESSED TWO
POINTS: THAT THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) SHOULD BE

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-----107502 032025Z /43

R 031904Z MAR 78
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ORIENTED TOWARD THE "INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS" AND
THAT FRANCE'S LIBERTY OF ACTION SHOULD BE RESPECTED.
FRANCE UNDER A GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT WOULD BECOME
THE "ADVOCATE OF A POLICY OF SOCIAL PROGRESS"
WITHIN THE EC, AND WOULD SEEK A "HARMONIZATION OF
SOCIAL LEGISLATION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL, A GUARANTEE
FOR THE EARNINGS OF FARMERS, AND PROTECTION OF MIGRANT
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WORKERS." THE GOF WOULD ALSO MAKE PROPOSALS TO ITS EC PARTNERS FOR THE CONTROL OF MULTINATIONAL FIRMS.

6. DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT: MARCHAIS UNDERLINED THE PCF'S OPPOSITION TO THE EXISTENCE OF BLOCKS IN EUROPE AND THE NEED FOR FRANCE TO FOLLOW A POLICY OF TOTAL NON-ALIGNMENT, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON COOPERATION AND DISARMAMENT. THE GOF, HE SAID, SHOULD PRONOUNCE ITSELF STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT (INCLUDING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS), AND SHOULD SEND A DELEGATION TO THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT DELAY." IT SHOULD ALSO CONCLUDE "NON-AGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF FORCE TREATIES" WITH THOSE COUNTRIES--INCLUDING THE USSR--WHICH SO DESIRE.

7. RELATIONS WITH THE USSR: ASKED ABOUT RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, MARCHAIS REPLIED BY HIGHLIGHTING THE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW BETWEEN THE PCF AND THE SOVIETS, "NOTABLY CONCERNING DEMOCRACY." HE SAID THE PCF "CONDEMNS" THE TENDENCY IN SOME SOCIALIST COUNTRIES TO REPLACE THE COMPETITION BETWEEN IDEAS BY REPRESSION. FINALLY, HE REJECTED THE NOTION OF SUPER-POWER CONTROL OVER WORLD AFFAIRS, AND RECALLED THE NEED FOR A FRENCH POLICY OF STRICT NON-ALIGNMENT.

8. DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM: ASKED IF THE PCF WAS EVOLVING AWAY FROM DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM, MARCHAIS SAID THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY WOULD BE MODIFIED AT THE 23RD PCF CONGRESS, BUT DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM WOULD REMAIN THE BASIS OF THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATION. DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM HAD, HE

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SAID "SHOWN ITS EXTREME SUPERIORITY" IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER PARTY ORGANIZATIONS. "ANY OTHER COMPORTMENT LEADS TO SCLEROSIS." BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM WAS THE PCF'S MODEL FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY.

9. RESPONSIBILITY FOR FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY: PERHAPS MARCHAIS' MOST INTERESTING COMMENTS RELATED TO THE FORMULATION OF FOREIGN POLICY UNDER A GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT, ESPECIALLY SINCE THIS IS AN AREA OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT AND GISCARD. ASKED WHETHER THE PRESIDENT OR THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD REPRESENT FRANCE IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS OR AT EUROPEAN SUMMITS,

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-----107557 032026Z /42

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MARCHAIS SAID IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT WHICH HAD THE
RESPONSIBILITY TO GUIDE NATIONAL POLICY IN ALL
AREAS; "THUS IT WILL DESIGNATE FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES
AT INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS." FURTHERMORE,
MARCHAIS FORESAW AN INCREASED ROLE FOR THE FRENCH
PARLIAMENT IN FOREIGN POLICY: "THE PARLIAMENT
SHOULD ALSO PRONOUNCE ITSELF ON IMPORTANT
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FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES, FOR EXAMPLE ON THE ADHESION TO TREATIES IN FORCE ON THE LIMITATION OF THE ARMS RACE, THE DESIGNATION OF FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES TO THE CONFERENCES AT GENEVA AND VIENNA, AND THE NOTIFICATION TO OUR COMMON MARKET PARTNERS OF THE DECISIONS WHICH WILL BE TAKEN BY FRANCE ON AGRICULTURAL PRICES."

10. COMMENT: MORE THAN HALF OF MARCHAIS' REMARKS WERE DEVOTED TO FOREIGN POLICY AND RELATED ISSUES, DEMONSTRATING THAT THE PCF CONSIDERS THIS AN AREA WHERE IT SHOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE IF IT IS INCLUDED IN A GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT. MARCHAIS ALSO MAINTAINED THE PCF'S POSITIONS IN SUCH AREAS AS DEFENSE AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY DESPITE RECENT DIFFERING STATEMENTS BY MITTERAND, SUGGESTING THAT FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY ARE AREAS ON WHICH THE PCF AND PS WILL HAVE TO NEGOTIATE-- AND REACH SOME UNDERSTANDING--IF THEY ARE TO GOVERN TOGETHER.
END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, COMMUNISTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS07839
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780098-0366
Format: TEL
From: PARIS USEEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803109/aaaadovl.tel
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: 4f9024b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PARIS 7283, 78 PARIS 1304
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3125400
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARCHAIS ON FOREIGN POLICY
TAGS: PARM, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4f9024b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014